



Ted W. Lieu

Assembly Member • 53rd Assembly District

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 13, 2007

Contact: David Ford
Phone: 916-319-2053

ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER, BLACK, AND LATINO CAUCUSES CALL OUT GOVERNOR ON LACK OF DIVERSITY IN JUDGES

Group cites “striking” lack of diversity among appointees.

Sacramento, CA – The leaders of the Legislature’s Asian Pacific Islander (“API”), Black, and Latino Caucuses today sent a letter to the leaders of the Assembly and Senate asking them to reject a call by Governor Schwarzenegger for 50 more judgeships, citing the Governor’s dismal record on appointing minorities and women to existing posts. Assemblymember Ted Lieu, the Incoming Chair of the API Caucus, signed the letter, along with Assemblymembers Alberto Torrico, Chair of the API Caucus, Mervyn Dymally, Chair of the Black Caucus, and Joe Coto, Chair of the Latino Caucus.

In the letter, the four Assemblymembers point out that, out of 260 judicial appointments made by Governor Schwarzenegger, only 12 (4.6%) have been API, 15 have been African American (5.8%), and 22 have been Latino (8.5%). These numbers pale in comparison to the percentages that each group represents in California’s population, 12.6%, 6.7%, and 35.2% respectively.

“Since the Governor took office, all three caucuses have tried to work with the Administration to bring forward qualified candidates,” Lieu said. “But the results just don’t get any better. There are certainly more than enough minority attorneys in California to fill these vacancies. There are more than 10,370 API attorneys, more than 3,320 African American attorneys, and more than 7,430 Latino attorneys statewide.”

The 50 new judgeships are the second installment of the Governor’s 3-year plan to add 150 new judges. The cost of the new positions in the proposed Budget is \$27.2 million. In the letter, the group pledges that, even if the 50 new positions are approved this year, the final installment may not be well received next year.

“This issue isn’t just going to go away,” Lieu pledged. “Having a diverse group of judges is part of the way we ensure the public’s trust in the legal system. We’re going to stay on the Governor until his record improves.”

All three caucuses actively reach out to qualified attorneys to encourage them to apply for judicial appointments, and to help them navigate the process. They have also met with the Governor’s staff on several occasions to recommend qualified minority candidates.

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